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PREVENTION OF DISEASE.

The scientific world is at present deeply wrapped up in study of the most effective methods of preventing disease. It has been positively determined in recent years that practically all disease is due directly to our own carelessness, and that nearly every form of disease is infectious.

The task is a stupendous one, presenting a bewildering array of conditions that must be coped with. Customs of long usage must be attacked by scientists and the people made to realize that they are disease-breeding.

Primarily the cause of disease is due to the careless habits of the people. For centuries men have expectorated upon the streets, for instance, with no thought of the terrible dangers arising from the careless habit.

Just at the present time the city of New York is wrestling with the pneumonia problem. Specialists are striving to determine the reason for the appalling number of fatal cases, and find as they progress in their work that it is due to many conditions which have not heretofore impressed the people as dangerous.

This is only an instance of the many causes to which the spread of infectious disease are attributed, but it is sufficient to show that our entire social system needs revision if we are to become healthful. The municipal authorities of the various cities of the country have been brought to realization of the fact that rigid health laws must be enacted and firmly enforced.

Some day there will be little or no disease in this world, or at least in the most intelligent portions of it. The health problems with which we now are wrestling will then have been solved.

as the switch must be applied to the refractory youth who rebels at the regulations imposed by his teacher.

HARBOR IMPROVEMENT.

No river and harbor bill will be passed by this congress, but Senators Mitchell and Fulton, of Oregon, find that the Columbia river can probably still be kept open. There is an unexpended balance of \$1,300,000 for the bar at its mouth, and \$100,000 to keep the river open from Portland to the sea.

This is far-fetched knocking and unworthy of the Ledger, which has usually been rational in dealing with river and harbor improvement matters. It is not plain that Portland is unfortunately located. The Oregon metropolis is located 120 miles from the ocean, yet there is a 22-foot channel leading to it, and in the past it has, through railroad combinations, been enabled to handle exports on a large scale.

We desire at this time to call especial attention to the fact that it is the duty of the government to defeat the intentions of nature whenever and wherever nature has placed an impediment in the way of a community's progress. Let us consider for a moment the local situation. Portland, Tacoma and Seattle are on the same basis so far as exports are concerned.

The Ledger might, with equal fairness, have argued that the government is doing wrong in appropriating money for improvement of the Columbia river bar. The mouth of the Columbia has already cost the government about four millions of dollars, and half as much again will probably be necessary to completion of the work undertaken there.

by kind to it. However, improvement of the bar is no more a boon to Astoria than to the entire northwest. Deeper water will affect every community in the Columbia basin and provide the government with a fine, fresh-water port, at which the largest ships afloat may call, and the utilization of which will give renewed impetus to every line of trade.

It is just as reasonable for the government to improve rivers and harbors as it is for the property owner to keep his buildings in good repair—simply a matter of business.

The damage suit industry for which Texas has long been infamous still flourishes, to the profit of rapacious lawyers and conscienceless claimants, but to the lasting injury of the state, says the Railway Age. Electric as well as steam railways are meat for these harpies—as, for example, the Houston Electric Company, against whose gross earnings of \$400,000 personal injury suits for more than \$1,000,000 were filed last year.

Commissioner Ware has decided that, as a soldier who is imprisoned for life is already being cared for by the government, he is not entitled to his pension.

If Japan and Russia are as long in fighting as they are in preparing for war, the conflict will last a long time.

In order to please the entire party the democratic candidate must have voted for and against Bryan.

The Parisians are very fond of horses. They ate 10,000 of them last year.

RAPID TRANSIT DISCUSSED.

Berlin, Jan. 27.—Before the budget committee of the Prussian diet, Minister of Public Works Budge, discussing the recent electrical rapid transit experiments said yesterday: "The studies are still in their preliminary stages. We cannot undertake the transportation of the general passenger public electrically. It is uncertain whether such roads can be economically profitable. The experiments will be continued with necessary precautions."

ORDER INJUNCTIONS WITHDRAWN.

Waterbury, Conn., Jan. 27.—Attorney A. W. Page, general counsel for the Connecticut Railway & Lighting Company, has ordered that the injunction proceedings and attachments against the labor unions of this city be withdrawn. They are out of the trolley strike and riots here last February.

THEATER BUILDING RELEASED.

Chicago, Jan. 27.—The Leopolis theater building is now in the hands of its owners. George Traeger has notified the police department to call off the policemen on guard at the building, and later notified the attorneys for Powers and Davis that he no longer wished the custody of the structure.

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